

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A scanner relay apparatus for relaying communication between a scanner apparatus and a plurality of terminals, the scanner apparatus sending out operation identification information associated with each of predetermined plural sorts of operation inputs, reading image data from an original according to an image reading command received from outside in response to the operation identification information and sending out the image data, the scanner relay apparatus comprising:

first association information storing means for storing first association information about association between the respective operation identification information and destination information of the respective terminals;

operation identification information receiving means for receiving the operation identification information from the scanner apparatus;

terminal selection means for selecting a destination terminal that is the terminal to be defined as a communication destination, on the basis of the operation identification information received from the scanner apparatus and the first association information stored in the first association information storing means;

image reading command sending means for sending the image reading command to the scanner apparatus in response

to reception of the operation identification information received from the scanner apparatus; and

image data receiving and sending means for receiving the image data sent back from the scanner apparatus and sending the received image data to the destination terminal.

2. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:

second association information storing means for storing second association information about association between the each of the operation identification information and predetermined terminal sending information sent to the terminal;

terminal sending information selection sending means for selecting the terminal sending information sent to the destination terminal, on the basis of the operation identification information received from the scanner apparatus and the second association information stored in the second association information storing means, and sending the selected terminal sending information to the destination terminal; and

image reading command receiving means for receiving the image reading command sent back from the destination terminal,

wherein the image reading command received by the

image reading command receiving means is sent by the image reading command sending means.

3. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 2, wherein the terminal sending information contains information about a condition of reading an original image on the scanner apparatus and/or a program for handling the image data on the terminal.

4. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:

third association information storing means for storing third association information about association between each of the operation identification information and information about the image reading command sent to the scanner apparatus; and

image reading command determining means for determining the image reading command sent by the image reading command sending means, on the basis of the operation identification information received from the scanner apparatus and the third association information stored in the third association information storing means.

5. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 2, further comprising association information external setting means

for receiving the first association information and the second association information from the terminal and setting.

6. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 4, further comprising association information external setting means for receiving the first association information and the third association information from the terminal and setting.

7. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 1, further comprising authentication means for receiving predetermined authentication information for each reception of the operation identification information from the scanner apparatus and authenticating on the basis of the authentication information, wherein the image data is sent by the image data receiving and sending means only when authentication by the authentication means is established.

8. An image reading controlling method executed by the use of a scanner apparatus for sending out operation identification information corresponding to each of predetermined plural sorts of operation inputs, reading image data from an original in accordance with an image reading command received from outside in response to the

operation identification information and sending out the image data, a plurality of terminals, and a scanner relay apparatus for relaying communication between the scanner apparatus and the terminals, the image reading controlling method comprising the steps of:

- on the scanner apparatus, sending the operation identification information to the scanner relay apparatus;

- on the scanner relay apparatus, selecting a destination terminal that is the terminal defined as a communication destination on the basis of association information on association between the operation identification information received from the scanner apparatus and destination information of each of the terminals;

- on the scanner relay apparatus, sending the image reading command associated with the operation identification information received from the scanner apparatus to the scanner apparatus;

- on the scanner apparatus, reading image data from an original in accordance with the image reading command received from the scanner relay apparatus and sending the image data back to the scanner relay apparatus;

- on the scanner relay apparatus, receiving the image data sent back from the scanner apparatus and sending the image data to the destination terminal; and

on the destination terminal, receiving the image data from the scanner relay apparatus.

9. A scanner relay apparatus for relaying communication between a scanner apparatus and a plurality of terminals, the scanner apparatus sending out operation identification information associated with each of predetermined plural sorts of operation inputs, reading image data from an original according to an image reading command received from outside in response to the operation identification information and sending out the image data, the scanner relay apparatus comprising:

first association information memory for storing first association information about association between the respective operation identification information and destination information of the respective terminals;

operation identification information receiver for receiving the operation identification information from the scanner apparatus;

terminal selector for selecting a destination terminal that is the terminal to be defined as a communication destination, on the basis of the operation identification information received from the scanner apparatus and the first association information stored in the first association information memory;

image reading command sender for sending the image reading command to the scanner apparatus in response to reception of the operation identification information received from the scanner apparatus; and

image data receiver/sender for receiving the image data sent back from the scanner apparatus and sending the received image data to the destination terminal.

10. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 9, further comprising:

second association information memory for storing second association information about association between the each of the operation identification information and predetermined terminal sending information sent to the terminal;

terminal sending information selection sender for selecting the terminal sending information sent to the destination terminal, on the basis of the operation identification information received from the scanner apparatus and the second association information stored in the second association information memory, and sending the selected terminal sending information to the destination terminal; and

image reading command receiver for receiving the image reading command sent back from the destination

terminal,

wherein the image reading command received by the image reading command receiver is sent by the image reading command sender.

11. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 10, wherein the terminal sending information contains information about a condition of reading an original image on the scanner apparatus and/or a program for handling the image data on the terminal.

12. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 9, further comprising:

third association information memory for storing third association information about association between each of the operation identification information and information about the image reading command sent to the scanner apparatus; and

image reading command determining portion for determining the image reading command sent by the image reading command sender, on the basis of the operation identification information received from the scanner apparatus and the third association information stored in the third association information memory.



13. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 10, further comprising association information external setting portion for receiving the first association information and the second association information from the terminal and setting.

14. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 12, further comprising association information external setting portion for receiving the first association information and the third association information from the terminal and setting.

15. The scanner relay apparatus of claim 9, further comprising authentication portion for receiving predetermined authentication information for each reception of the operation identification information from the scanner apparatus and authenticating on the basis of the authentication information, wherein the image data is sent by the image data receiver/sender only when authentication by the authentication portion is established.